

near the body. If a small table is used, and a weight dropped over each of the two sides, the fowl will be firmly secured, and can be dealt with by one operator, who, to do his work well, must stand so that its back will be toward him. All the small feathers, from the hip bone to the ribs, and over the last rib, should be plucked off, and the part well soused with cold water. The knife is now to be stuck in about half an inch between the first and second ribs from the hip bone, and a cut made downward and forward to the end of the ribs, and then nearly up to the backbone. One of the instruments is an expander, with which the ribs are to be held apart. If the thin skin which is now exposed, covering the bowels, is cut, the testicles, of which there are two, will be exposed. These can be taken out by the finger and thumb—and many prefer that way—or may be seized one at a time by the nippers, and after a twist around, to separate from the attachments, will easily come away. The danger is in rupturing the large vein which lies under the testicles, and care must be taken to prevent this taking place. The great advantage I see in this method over the older ones is, that no sewing up of the incision is necessary, and the birds can be liberated as soon as the operation is over. I have seen them run away and commence eating, as if nothing had taken place—a testimony to the harmlessness of the operation. The only thing needing to be done is to see that, for a few days, the birds do not roost on perches, but are bedded upon soft straw or hay.

In the case of pullets, the operation is even more simple. When laid upon the table, the left leg should be drawn forward so as to expose the left flank, and here an incision must be made close to the side bone. The lower bowel will in this way be brought to view, and by the side of it will be seen the egg passage. This latter must be brought to the orifice of the wound by a hooked piece of wire, and either cut across or a piece completely cut out. In this way the production of eggs will be entirely prevented.

The chickens operated upon should not be more than four months old, and in the case of pullets, should never have laid. For at least twenty-four hours before they are so treated, they must be kept without food. A good light is needed, or mistakes may easily be made. The chief dangers, with all systems of castrating, is in tearing the veins near the testicles, a certain result of which is that the bird will bleed to death; and in the losing of the testicles among the intestines, which latter is almost certain to cause inflammation and death. These seldom happen except through want of care, or inexperience. Carefulness is, therefore, important, and to secure the experience, I strongly rec-

ommend every novice to make several experiments on dead chickens, so as to learn exactly where to cut, and the position of the testicles, etc. It would be gross cruelty to commence first on a living fowl. One of the essential things for all operations, is firmness and confidence, without which a bungle is sure to be made. If possible, it is well to see some one else operate before attempting the same.

STEPHEN BEALE, in *Country Gentleman*.

The Season.

Editor Review.

Our hatching in this locality is about over for this year, though I hear of an occasional setting being put down to make up for the bad luck of the previous months. Reports here are unanimous in setting down this spring's hatching as the worst on record. For my part I have never had anything approaching my experience of this spring. Eggs in general were fertile, but the chicks died in the shell. As the spring advanced, they seemed to come more nearly to perfection before dying. In the early part of April and last week in March the chicks seemed to die at a very early stage, being only partly formed, and in many cases not formed.

I have no doubt that the long, steady winter accounts for this bad luck to a great extent, but why, I cannot understand. Of course inactivity and consequently fat, may account for some of it, and I do not doubt if during our severe winters, our fowls could be prevailed upon to take more exercise, better hatching would be the result; but to compel fowls to expose themselves in an open barn yard, to search for food will prevent that development which is requisite to bring the larger varieties up to the standard weight. There is in this neighborhood a flock of Light Brahmas, direct from my stock, and they have had this barn yard exercise in winter time, the result is after about three years, although their eggs hatched splendidly this spring, they have deteriorated in size and color too. Give a Shorthorn cow the same treatment that our common stock gets and the result would soon be disaster. So I conclude there has to be a means found between these extremes, that is, good shelter with sufficient room for exercise. I shall try the experiment this winter of feeding one flock in an open shed, and with grain in the straw, or unthrashed, exclusively.

But though I have to report a very unsatisfactory hatching season, chicks have never grown faster and looked better at their age than this season.

I may say I still adhere to my old notion that a chick that cannot kick himself out of the shell, is not worth helping out. I have had dozens die this year after they had punctured the shell. I do not know how it is with others, or whether it is a